

Appl. No. 10/080,306
Amdt. dated January 15, 2004
Reply to Office Action of October 20, 2003

Remarks

Amendments have been made to the specification. Specifically, paragraph [0052] has been rewritten to add the terms "endless loop." No new matter is added by this amendment. The endless loop gasket is shown in Figures 8 and 10 at reference numeral 20a, thus, no amendments have been made to the drawings.

Claims 20 and 28-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 20 and 28 have been amended to conform to 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph and are now believed to be definite, distinctly pointing out the claimed subject matter with regards to the invention. Claims 29-36 depend from Independent claim 28. It is believed that these claims are now in compliance with 35 U.S.C. §112 as there are no specific rejections cited by the examiner with respect to these claims. It is requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 19-22, 24, 25, 28-31, 33, 34, and 37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Trautwein (4,057,865). Claim 37 has also been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Edwards (3,659,298). These rejections are respectfully traversed in light of the present amendment.

Independent claim 19 has been amended to include all of the limitations previously recited in claim 23. Specifically, claim 19 now recites a sole compartment sealable against water intrusion positioned in the bottom of the hull to define with the hull a double bottom, the sole compartment having a volume sufficient to displace sufficient water to keep the boat with a payload afloat in the absence of a waterproof barrier in the joint between the bow and stern elements. The Examiner has indicated that this combination contains allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 28 has been amended to include all of the limitations previously recited in claim 32. Specifically, claim 28 now recites a sole compartment sealable against

Appl. No. 10/080,306
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water intrusion positioned in the bottom of the hull to define with the hull a double bottom, the sole compartment having a volume sufficient to displace sufficient water to keep the boat with a payload afloat in the absence of a waterproof barrier in the joint between the bow and stern elements. The Examiner has indicated that this combination contains allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Independent claim 37 has been amended to include limitations recited in claims 23 and 32. Specifically, independent claim 37 now recites a sole compartment sealable against water intrusion positioned in the bottom of the hull to define with the hull a double bottom. Neither Trautwein or Edwards disclose a sole compartment sealable against water intrusion. As discussed above, the examiner has indicated that the subject matter in claims 23 and 32 is allowable. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 26 and 27 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In light of the arguments above, it is believed that dependent claims 26 and 27 are thus allowable in their original form.

Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 35 and 36 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office action to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In light of the arguments above, it is believed that dependent claims 35 and 36 are thus allowable in their original form.

Claims 20-22, 24, and 25 depend from independent claim 19 and are thus believed to be allowable for the reasons stated above.

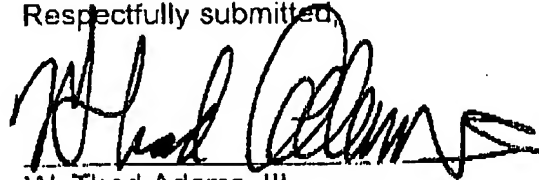
Claims 29-31, 33, and 34 depend from independent claim 28 and are thus believed to be allowable for the reasons stated above.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 19-22, 24-31, and 33-

Appl. No. 10/080,306
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37 at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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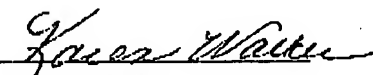
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Appl. No. 10/080,306
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